Budget reveals education spending not keeping up with student growth



The State Budget has revealed that education spending in WA is yet again failing to keep up with the growth in student numbers.

The budget shows a 1.7% increase in education funding, which is below the student growth rate of 1.8%.

“What this means is that in real terms, there has been yet another cut to education spending in this state,” said State School Teachers’ Union President Pat Byrne.

“This will result in less funding per student, bigger class sizes and cuts to important programs.

“Again, schools will be expected to do more with less.”

Ms Byrne said the union was also disappointed that the government’s Workforce Renewal Program was still in place.

“This means $50 million gone from the education budget,” she said.

“Any staff or program cuts in education hurt all students. Schools need the support services that this government is targeting.

“These types of cuts further reduce the system’s capacity to tackle issues such as violence in schools.

“And on top of this, the system is set to lose about another 150 teachers as a result of the government extending its targeted voluntary separation scheme - another $21 million gone.”

Ms Byrne said it was also disappointing that the government hadn’t used the budget as an opportunity to pick up the shortfall created by the Federal Government’s failure to fund kindergarten for four year olds from 2018.

“Federal funding for 15 hours of kindy runs out at the end of the 2017/18 financial year, and the State Government has made no commitment to continue the funding,” she said.

“We believe the 15 hours of education is critical; every child should have access to kindergarten from an early age and the government should commit to funding the universal access to 15 hours of kindy for the children of this state.”

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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